

Exeter Canal boatyard wins contract to build two ferries for Malta

Exeter Maritime Services has contracted to build two 120 passenger low wash 19m ferries for operations across the Grand Harbour and Marsamxetto Harbour in Malta

Exeter shipyard Exeter Maritime Services (EMS) located at Gabriel's Wharf on the Exeter Canal has secured a contract to build two 19m ferries for Marsamxetto Steamferry Services Ltd. Malta. Both vessels will be delivered this summer and will provide commuter and tourist links to Valletta across the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett Harbour. To the north west of Valletta one ferry will operate between Sliema and Marsamxetto and to the south east the second ferry will connect Lascaris with Bormla and Isla.

The contract for the two ferries is valued at approximately £1.2 million.

The ferries will each have a capacity for 120 with 96 seats in the main passenger lounge and 24 seats on the upper deck. The upper deck has been designed to accommodate a further 30 outdoor seats to increase the capacity to 150 should traffic volumes increase sufficiently to justify the extra capacity. The design was completed by Australian naval architect Adam Schwetz who undertook the commission from the shipyard and worked in close cooperation with Marsamxetto Steamferry Services. The design brief called for two fuel efficient ferries with very low wash characteristics capable of providing frequent services across the harbours with the minimum of disruption to other harbour uses and vessels moored in close proximity to each ferry's route.

Passenger traffic volumes are expected to increase with the introduction of the new ferries and this dictated a passenger discharge and loading arrangement that could provide fast turn-rounds at each of the four terminals with the possibility of simultaneous loading and discharge. The vessels will each feature two bow access points and will dock bow-on to the terminals. Wheelchair access was also a specific requirement and this dictated the introduction of wheelchair-friendly loading arrangements and an interior free of steps or other obstructions.

The design is compliant with DnV HSLC Rules (+1A1 HSLC R4 Passenger EO) and the vessels will comply with the requirements of the local Maltese authority Transport Malta.

Propulsion will be provided by two Watermota Doosan LO66TI diesel engines driving Teignbridge fixed pitch propellers. Teignbridge will also supply shafting, sterngear and rudders.

Principal Particulars

Length o.a.	19.32m
Length w.l	19.00m
Beam (moulded)	6.60m
Draught (design)	1.00m
Crew	2
Passengers	122
Engines	2 x Doosan LO66TI
Rating	2 x 110kW at 1,800rpm
Speed	10 knots